[*Continued from page 43.*]

American women in that long and bloody struggle. Spartan-like mothers sent their sons to battle to return with laureled shields; or to be borne home on them; maidens tore themselves from the embraces of lovers, and placing banners in their hands woven by their own delicate fingers, stimulated them to heroic deeds. They felt that all that makes home and country dear was at stake, and that life would lose all its charms if the Union was dismembered, and the prospects of future glory and prosperity were blasted. Tender-hearted and soft-limbed women followed the Union soldiers to the field, hovered around them like ministering angels, nursed the sick, bound up the bleeding veins of the wounded, nourished the drooping, administered consolation to the dying, and conveyed to their last resting place, the fallen brave. Others renounced the luxuries of elegant homes for the fetid atmospheres of military hospitals, gathered funds for the relief of the widow and orphan, prepared bandages, lint, and delicacies for the sick and wounded, and did other good offices grateful in the eyes of God and men. They were worthy of you, and you of them. They rewarded you with their hands as lovers, and they welcomed you home as husbands who had reflected unfading glory on their names and offspring. If they were widowed, they consoled themselves with the bright fame your comrades left behind them, and they taught their children to emulate their heroism and patriotism. Never did American women, pre-eminent as they are for all the qualities which dignify and embellish their sex, shine with a purer lustre than in these dark and troublous scenes of havoc and slaughter.

"We have not come to these sacred precincts to glory over a defeated foe, to foment evil passions and sectarian feuds, to defame the living, or wrong the dead. We acknowledge that a bad cause was stoutly championed, and that it was illustrated by deeds of lofty courage. We rejoice that it did not succeed, both for the welfare of those who espoused it, our own sake, and the cosmopolitan interests of liberty and civilization. We have been enemies for a time, but there is no reason why we should not be friends now and hereafter, why we should not forget everything but that we are citizens of the same country, sharing alike in all its benefits and blessings, and dwelling in equal security under the shadow of its mighty name. If there is to be a rivalry let it be a rivalry of devotion to our native land and its institutions, a rivalry of loyalty to sound principles of government, and a generous emulation for the solidification of the Union and the promotion of mutual happiness and prosperity. Come what may, however, as long as the rememberance of your unselfish patriotism shall last, as long as these tombs shall be consecrated shrines where the worshippers of liberty shall annually repair to offer their oblations and to crown them with floral tributes, so long the fire of patriotism will burn with unblenched purity, and there never will be wanting defenders to the Republic should its unity or existence be again assailed, and who, like you, will be ready to lay down their lives in its behalf."

At Chester, Pennsylvania, it was never so generally observed. The mills were all closed and the operatives turned out *en masse*. Flags flew at half-mast from nearly every house-top in the city. Post Wilde, G. A. R., began their preparations two months ago and they were most successfully carried out to-day. Besides the procession, composed of the different civic and military organizations, the fire companies, the clergymen, Mayor, city officers and members of Council, there was something entirely new in the ceremonies. A chorus of two thousand children from the Sunday schools of the city, under the direction of Professor John R. Sweeny, of the Pennsylvania Military Academy, sang two hymns composed especially for the occasion.

In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, there were the usual ceremonies of decorating the graves in the various cemeteries, street demonstrations, and religious services. Business during the forenoon was partially suspended. All the banks, government offices, and other public buildings were closed, and in the afternoon the suspension of business was general.

The day was more generally observed at Baltimore than for many years. The graves of the Union dead at Loudon Cemetery were decorated. The procession was composed of troops from Fort McHenry and the Grand Army posts. The graves of the Confederate dead in the same cemetery were also decorated.

At Boston the ceremonies were akin to those carried out at Philadelphia. The various posts marched through the streets bearing garlands and bouquets and accompanied by bands of music. All public business was suspended and the national flag was displayed in every part of the city. From an oration pronounced by the gifted Colonel Higgens we extract the following sentiments:

"We come together for a task that has for us a peculiar sacredness. To others it is simply a poetic service, little in common with their accustomed ways; but to us who served in the late war, however humbly, it is as if we again grasped our departed comrades by the hand. To us they are as yet as they were when they answered their last roll-call—still young, still ardent. Our hair grows gray, but theirs does not. This rite is to us a memorial that they and we belong to one fraternity—the fraternity of veterans of the Great Civil War. When we all have died the immediate record of that war will have died with us; and the next generation will know it only as we know the American Revolution—remotely, as of something written in books. Let us ask ourselves anew to-day, what was it all for? What did the war accomplish? For what did our brothers die?

1. They died to give the nation peace. Do you remember the time when in any town in the land you might, at any moment, see some list of names brought out and posted at the door of some newspaper office? Then you might see a crowd silently gather around that door, collecting from all quarters as if the birds of the air had spread the news. Suddenly you might see some man stagger blindly out of that group, holding his hand to his head, as if the bullet had reached his brain instead of his young brother's; or you might see a woman suddenly fall fainting, as if it were herself, not her husband, who was struck down. That such groups have vanished these dozen years, that no one now stops on the streets to read worse news than the rise and fall of stock, you may thank these graves.

"And you remember that it was not in the city alone that the war left its mark. I recall how a friend of mine, a woman who had worked for the soldiers till her nerves weary, sought for rest in the country during the war. The train upon the rural railway stopped at a little station surrounded with hills, so lonely that not a house was in sight. When it stopped, the one passenger who was assisted out was a wounded soldier on crutches, and as the cars whirled away my friend saw one lonely woman walking down from an unseen farm house to receive him. Safe from the thought of war? The little far-off valley, like the city, was filled with that one thought. That it passed away you owe to those whom you laid in these graves.

"2. The soldiers won for us *Union*. That this is still a nation, that it is anything but an accidental alliance of a few jealous and warring States, we owe to them. The picture which rises so grandly before the American eye in foreign countries, of a continent, which is a home for liberty, and receives the poor and the humble from all nations of the earth, giving to them shelter and employment and to their children education—that belongs to the work achieved by these graves.

"I once was encamped near a New York regiment called popularly "The Lost Children," because it was said to hold representatives from almost every European nation. Such a babel of dialects as you heard in passing that camp-ground! but there were words which they all understood, and when the order "Column! Forward!" came, they all fell into their places and obeyed. That solemn command, carrying in English words a summons that all nationalities can obey, is the watchword of American civilization; and it is the soldiers who preserved for us its meaning. But for them, each one of us might still have a State, but not one of us would have a nation; every American born would be a man without a country.

"3. The soldiers won for this nation *liberty*. I remember once hearing, at an anti-slavery meeting, Wendell Phillips say of Garrison "may he not die till he has heard the shouts of the liberated millions he has helped to free." It sounded eloquent, but incredible; it was as if a man invited you to visit him a hundred years from to-day. Garrison has just died full of years and of honors; and his last words were a plea, not for slaves, but for free men; not for the negro as a chained slave in Mississippi, but a free emigrant into Kansas. That every American, black or white, may now go where he pleases, and work as he pleases, you owe to the soldiers whom you laid in these graves.

"4. The soldiers gave to the nation *prosperity*. We mourn our long business depression; but it is because it has taken all these years to recall us from the period of inflation in which the war left us. Business may be good or bad—the returned soldiers may have been successful or unsuccessful—but the most successful business man in the country owes it to the soldiers that there is any such thing as business at all. What could there have been, had the nation been cut up into a series of little States, each with its own custom house perhaps or its own separate system of patent laws; or had it even been divided into two half republics, with a guerilla war forever raging along Mason and Dixon's line? That this calamity was averted we owe to these graves."

From all over New England we receive interesting accounts of the observance of Decoration Day.

There were many thousands gathered on the field of Gettysburgh, brought in by trains from all the surrounding country. The oration there, one of the finest productions we have read, was by General McCandless. We publish it entire in this issue.

The day was observed at Cincinnati, Ohio, by the closing of the Chamber of Commerce and other public offices, the display of flags, processions, and the usual ceremonies at the cemeteries. At Spring Grove, where lie most of the gallant dead, there was a large attendance Judge J. B. Foraker was the orator of the day. In his address he said:

"Toward the people of the South, whether they survived the struggle or fell in it, living or dead, I haven't a single unkind thought of any character or description whatsoever; nor do I believe that any Union soldier has. On the contrary, I know it is the sincerest desire of all to see every wound of the war healed—every breach and gap closed up. But at the same time I know, too, that we don't want, and cannot afford to have these results at the expense of a sickly sentimentalism that would dwarf the patriotism of which they should be born. We would teach also that the people of this country, in the matter of patriotism are not going backward; that another such exigency as that of 1861 would be met in the same way. If any man doubt this, if any man thinks there is less patriotism in the country, less devotion to the Union, less love and affection for the old flag, let him look abroad over the land on this national Decoration Day and be undeceived. Let him witness the impressive spectacle of a whole people gathered in sorrow, but with the choicest flowers of springtime in their hands, about the graves of their dead soldiers. Let them listen to the patriotic hymns that will be sung, the fervid sentiments of patriotism that will be expressed, and from these things let him learn that the loyalty of this people is as unquestioned as ever."

At Columbus, Ohio, a large procession, consisting of regulars and militia, civic societies, ex-soldiers and citizens, paraded the streets, and thence to Green Lawn cemetery, when, after an oration by ex-Governor Dennison, the soldiers' graves were decorated by ex-volunteer soldiers. An immense concourse witnessed the exercises.

At Dayton there was a great gathering. This immense crowd was most probably drawn hither by the announcement that General Joe Hooker, "Fighting Joe," would speak, and speak he did at the soldiers' home. Here is his speech:

COMRADES, AUDIENCE, ALL: I have been sold many times, but never so badly as now. I have been presented and almost forced upon you to talk. I have no more respect for talking than you have. Words do not mean much, and I go for fellows that go for deeds and for actions. Members of Congress are born talking, but soldiers never talk. Who ever heard General Grant talk? Who of you talk? Why, if I wanted to address Niagara it would be no more difficult than to address you. I never spoke out of doors in my life before, but as I see some of you look to me, you have good cause, for, as I said before, I have been sold for a few words, and rather than disappoint you, I came here. When I wanted you, and those like you—no matter how exacting my orders were, no matter how difficult or perilous of execution—you never threw off on me, and it is not in me to throw off now on you. [Applause.] I am not here to talk. I came to see how you observe Decoration Day, the day of days to you and to me. I came here for the purpose of seeing you. I was here a few years ago, but the home was nothing then to what it is now. To judge of it as I see it to-day, I would not know that I ever saw it before. I can simply say, because I must be brief, that there is only one word in the English language to express it—"prodigious," "prodigious." I thank my country for having furnished you with the home she has. Unlike this member of Congress here, I do not throw off on my antagonist. You never learned that from me. After my antagonist surrenders I want to take him by the hand, and I want to do all I can for him, and you never learned any different feeling from me, but you did from some outsider, probably some member of Congress. I will tell you an anecdote: In the war between England and France, in the time of Napoleon, a cavalry officer sallied out from his troops, having discerned an English officer separated from his command, to give him single combat, but after riding up to him he saw he had lost an arm, and he said: "It is true your country and my country are at war, but the unfortunate belong to no country." After an enemy surrendered he is no enemy of mine. He is a friend of mine, and particularly when he has honored every field he has fought upon. Then he is worthy to be yours and my antagonist. I will respect that man as long as I live, and if he wants anything I will open my pockets to him just as I would to you, but I am being betrayed into a good deal longer talk than I expected to be. [Cries of "Go on!" "Go on!"] No, I am not going to. God bless every one of you." [Cries of "Go on!" "Go on!" "Go on!" and tremendous cheering.]

Chigago was not behind her sister cities in showing honor and respect to the gallant dead. All the stores were closed and a grand civil and military procession took place.

In the evening Farwell Hall was well filled by an audience come to hear words and songs commemorative of the heroes to whose memory that day was dedicated.

Patriotic speeches were made, and odes recited, by prominent citizens. At Joliet, Ill., the Governor of the state, (Mr. Callum) was the orator. We take following fine passages therefrom:

"Then the men whose graves we have to-day decorated with flowers tore themselves away from home and friends. They laid down the implements of industry and took into their hands the weapons of war. They joined their comrades ten hundred thousand strong, who came up from the valleys and down from the hills, away from the green pastures and from besides the still waters, out from the cities, from everywhere in the North, nerved with determination in eye and step, shouting the battle cry of freedom. They were encouraged by fathers, mothers, children, and nearer ones still, and dearer ones, who crowded along the highways and byways to see them pass to the "big wars that make ambition glorious." They fought like brave men, long and well;" "they conquered, and out of the war, triumphant and glorious, came the doctrine of the Declaration of Independence, that all men are created equal and consequently free. It was received by the people with acclamations and found its home in the Constitution. "The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner." The ballot was put into the hands of the late slave, and with that act, the pledge was given that he should be protected in the privilege of using it in safety and in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience. The doctrine of secession was destroyed, and, out of the war, the Union emerged a universally recognized nation, a government possessed of the power to compel respect from either foreign or domestic foes, with power to enforce its will upon all—to protect the citizen in the exercise of his political rights, with none to molest him or make him afraid, wherever the flag floats above him. It was in the high enterprise of saving our country from destruction, that the men whose memories we honor to-day, laid down their lives; and I cannot withhold the expression, that the work that they accomplished must not be destroyed. The doctrine of the States soverignity, as understood by the secessionists, must not be permitted to obtain new vitality and the fact should not be overlooked that there is something like it in the features of the doctrine now asserted. by the men who formerly advocated secession—that the General Government has no right to protect the ballot in the States from the corruptions of rascals or the intimidations of armen men, even when such corruptions rnd intimidations are either encouraged or overlooked by the State government."

The people of St. Louis honored themselves by paying tribute to defenders of the Union. Business was generally suspended, banners were seen in all parts of the city, and various processions took place to the different cemeteries At one of these a glorious address was made, by Judge Forbush, from which we cannot refrain from making a few quotations. Said he:

"And then to feel the joy and prides of finding one's self, for the first time, a soldier; the satisfaction with which the first new uniform was tried on, and found to fit; the joy with which the first bright arms were received and handled; the pride with which the young volunteer fastened to his shoulder those bright plates of brass which a paternal government had given to every private, perhaps to support the weight of his knapsack, perhaps to prevent imaginary sabres from cleaving him in twain but which in his young imagination were embryonic epaulettes, investing him with the brevet rank of captain, or colonel, or brigadier. How many imaginary rebels were transfixed with that bright bayonet, or with that straight sergeant's sword! With what attention the first instructions were received, how rapidly the first evolutions were learned, and what joy filled every heart when, for the first time, the regiment stood out on dress parade. And how strange to feel again, if indeed we can, the terror of the first long-roll at night, the excitement of the first skirmish, the dreadful rushing hours of the first great battle. To see again the encampment of an army corps, like a fair white city, filling some great plain; to see from some high hill that army in march, winding its way across a broad valley like a great blue serpent specked with white; to break up camp, fall in line, and take one's place in that lengthening column, while the regimental band measures and quickens the first steps to the dear old tune, "The girl I left behind me;" to see the leaves of a strange forest vibrate at the startling news, rung out by the concert of a thousand vo ices